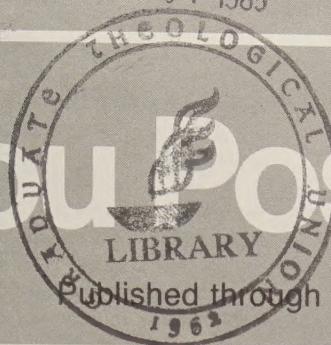


Keeping You Posted



Newsletter of the United Church of Christ

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UCBHM Grants \$35,000 To Family Life Programs

UC Board for Homeland Ministries has recently given \$39,500 in seed money grants from the 1984 Family Thank Offering toward "Affirming the Parent-Child Relationship."

Purpose of the 18 grants is "support and development of parenting ministries, parent-child advocacy programs, and programs addressing the concerns of adults with aging parents," explains Faith A. Johnson, UCBHM's family life and women's issues secretary.

"Six program associates, one in each region of the UCC, worked with conference task forces, associations and local churches on these programs," she continues.

The largest grant of \$5,000 was given to the New Jersey Association of the Central Atlantic Conference for *Parenting: The Joyous Confusion*, a videotape resource with guide.

The Nebraska Conference received \$3,500 to help churches develop skills in nurturing spiritual development based on faith.

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Chernenko Answers Church Letter About Geneva Arms Talks

A letter on the U.S.-U.S.S.R. arms talks sent by a group of U.S., Soviet and Eastern European church leaders was responded to by Soviet Chairman Konstantin Chernenko. Issued in behalf of the group, which has been meeting periodically since 1962, by co-chairs UCC President Avery D. Post and Reformed Church in Hungary Bishop Karoly Toth, the statement was also directed to President Ronald Reagan.

Such statements to U.S. and Soviet leaders have been sent after each of the six meetings of the group, sometimes by all the church officials and sometimes by its co-chairs, Dr. Post explains. The meetings focus on church matters and on a shared concern for world peace, he reveals.

At its most recent meeting, held in Dec. in Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, the group welcomed renewed arms negotiations between the U.S. and Soviet Union. It requested both countries to initiate a bilateral agreement for a nuclear freeze, including a comprehensive test ban; to adopt the proposal to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, and to ban the

military use of outer space, including the deployment of nuclear weapons in space.

"We are bound together in Jesus Christ, and are pledged not to be separated," the church leaders wrote, "though we acknowledge and openly discuss our differences in an atmosphere of mutual trust. We are committed to peace with justice for all."

In a letter written on the eve of the Shultz-Gromyko negotiations, Mr. Chernenko stressed the importance of the issues emphasized by the church leaders.

"The Soviet Union attaches a great significance to reaching an agreement with the United States of America on the whole package of issues which encompasses the non-militarization of space as well as nuclear arms," he stated.

The Soviet leader also pointed to "a need to take urgent and effective measures in order to

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Ben Mohr Herbster 1904-1984

Ben Mohr Herbster, 80, first President of the UCC, died Dec. 16 at Kettering Memorial Hospital, Dayton, OH, from complications following an operation.

A "pastor's pastor" who fortuitously combined the spiritual zeal of a preacher with the down-to-earth requisites of an administrator, Dr. Herbster played a key role in negotiations that led to the formation of the UCC.

Avery D. Post, UCC President, characterized Dr. Herbster as "a quiet, resolute man whose pastoral and diplomatic skills made him the perfect individual to knit together the diverse and often complicated elements in the UCC. He was determined that the new church he helped form would be dedicated to carrying out the biblical directive to be the servant of the poor, the ill, the unjustly imprisoned and the dispossessed people of the world."

Dr. Herbster had been minister of the Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church in Norwood, OH for 30 years when he was elected

the first President of the United Church at its constituting General Synod in 1961. He was re-elected to a second four-year term in 1965. He retired in 1969.

Although he endorsed experimental ministries and other innovations, Dr. Herbster was a strong supporter of the importance of an enlightened local church as the basic unit to carry on the work of Christianity.

Speaking at a retreat for ministers Dr. Herbster warned his audience that any cleavage between theology and social action would be "absolutely fatal" for the church.

In his opening address at General Synod in 1963 Dr. Herbster spoke about the need for racial justice and the duty of the UCC to bring it about.

His interpretation resulted in a vote to deny financial aid to local churches and institutions that would not accept Black members and in formation of what is now the denomination's Commission for Racial Justice.

THEOLOGY FORUM:

Plurality and the Chocolate Chip Cookie

by Virginia H. Child

What is plurality in the United Church of Christ? What does it mean? From whence does it come? How is plurality a part of our sense of being as a denomination?

On all sides we are beset by folk who proclaim the one right way to fiscal sanity, racial equality, world peace, or the chocolate chip cookie. But is there just "one right way"? Cookie bakers all over the UCC pondered the true nature of chocolate chip cookies during the Nestle boycott. But the end of the boycott has brought no end to questions about "one right way."

From the beginning, the United Church has had a strong sense of the limitations of human answers to eternal questions. From that sense has grown our belief that there may well be more than one right answer, or the right answer may not be what we want.

We have agonized, and continue to do so, over racial injustice; over the role of women in church and society; over our Government's involvement in the affairs of other nations; over working in defense industries.

Pro-choice or pro-life? For or against the participation of homosexuals in the church? Charismatic or not? Evangelical (as in Billy Graham) or Evangelical (as in concerned for the Gospel)? Trinitarian according to the Chalcedonian formulation (as Robert Schuller) or trinitarian according to inclusive language? Or is there somewhere in between? Or have we not yet discerned the answers?

Dogmatic adherence to a creed has never been a part of our spirit of being. We claim "the faith of the historic Church" at the same time as we affirm "the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own . . . in honesty of thought and expression." Our Constitution goes on to declare our inter-

relationship with all who claim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We who live under that claim are responsible for our understanding of it. Each of us is capable of understanding the faith to which Christ calls us. Baptists call that capability "soul competency"; it is the basis of the priesthood of all believers.

The freedom to argue, prayerfully and faithfully to agree to disagree, to co-exist in plurality is not an unlimited license, but rather a mutual searching for and journeying along the path of faith.

We are still a folk wandering in the desert, looking for the light which guides us to the Promised Land. Plurality affirms that there is no right way to stand and look for the light; our Christian commitment affirms that it is Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, to whom we look.

Ms. Child is director of church relations at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA; an ordained UCC minister with an M. Div. from Andover Newton where she is a candidate for an S.T.M. She has taught UCC theology workshops at the New England Conference on Mission.

Priorities Report

PEACE

Bumper stickers that say "LET PEACE BEGIN WITH ME" are available from UCC Board for Homeland Ministries. A sample sticker will be sent to each UCC church in the spring mailing from UCBHM's division of publication. For more copies, send \$5/dozen or \$25/hundred, plus \$1.50 for postage and handling, to Division of Publication, UCBHM, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001.

By an overwhelming vote, Lyonsville Congregational UCC, Indian Head Park, IL, added a peace statement to its articles and bylaws. Primarily a response to the issues of peace and nuclear proliferation, the statement also discusses a theological response to violence in the world, reports pastor Thomas S. Neilsen. The vote commits the church to work for peaceful resolution of conflicts, addressing of grievances, redirection of resources from war to human betterment, and resistance against violence. It also calls for re-establishment of the church "as the vehicle through which peace is proclaimed and exemplified and by which persons are made into disciples of the Prince of Peace."

FAMILY LIFE

Tired of the smoke, alcohol and "cruising" that dominate traditional bars, seven members of South Congregational UCC, Rochester, NY, put together a no-smoke, no-alcohol bar that is drawing a full house every Fri. night. "Bar-none" offers more than nonalcoholic drinks and fruit and vegetable plates and more than live and recorded music and dancing, according to Steven C. Law, coordinator of the UCC Urban Council of Rochester. The bar gives recovering alcoholics a new support group to replace "bar buddies," offers neighborhood people a place "to unwind after a hard day's work" and is staffed by volunteers who listen to the wide variety of people who come in. For details on opening such an alternative bar, contact Mr. Law at 141 Pearl St., Rochester, NY 14607.

Church of the Beatitudes, Phoenix, AZ, has launched a support group called "Generations" to aid family members in caring for or overseeing the affairs of aging relatives. Comprised of people who have these responsibilities, the group meets once a month to air personal problems and discuss a topic related to aging. To start similar groups use of a "qualified leader" in the "helping professions" is strongly recommended by the program's initiator, Dosia Carlson, who can be reached at Beatitudes Center for Developing Older Adult Resources, 555 W. Glendale Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021.

YOUTH/YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

The Youth Ministry Cabinet of the Wisconsin Conference is planning to take a peace-centered worship service "on the road" in a youth

peace caravan during July. The worship service will be created during the conference's creative arts camp for senior high students, after which it will be offered to local congregations, who will provide beds and meals for the caravan members.

"Youth in the World: Here and Now!" is the theme of a state youth event to be sponsored by the New York Conference's Youth Task Force in Apr. The event will focus on what it means to be a Christian youth in light of all the issues youth face in New York and throughout the world.

Job Opportunities

PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE seeks a new conference president to begin Jan. 1, 1986. The successful candidate will serve as the spiritual leader of the conference as well as chief administrative officer. For a complete job description or to submit applications, write to Glenn Rader, Penn Central Conference, 900 S. Arlington, Ave., Rm. 126, Harrisburg, PA 17109.

THE CHICAGO REPORTER seeks editor/publisher. The award-winning investigative newsletter on racial and urban issues is published by the UCC-related Community Renewal Society. Successful candidate must possess substantial experience and skills in journalism, administration and fundraising as well as knowledge of Chicago. Salary is negotiable. Apply by Feb. 15 to Reporter Search Committee, Community Renewal Society, 18 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

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prevent further destabilization of the strategic situation and to preclude new rounds of the arms race."

More than 30 other denominations were represented at the East-West meeting, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Greek Orthodox Church, Friends United Meeting, Lutheran Church in America, Reformed Church in America, Reformed Church in Hungary, Russian Orthodox Church, Evangelical Church of the Union of East Germany, Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Rumanian Orthodox Church, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren and Czechoslovak Hussite Church.



Andre Jacques, third from left, secretary for migration for the World Council of Churches, and representatives of Salvadoran, Filipino, and Haitian organizations during a meeting of the Training and Research Institute for Migration, supported by UC Board for Homeland Ministries' immigration task force.

UCC Ethiopian Appeal Tops \$225,000— More Help Needed

UCC congregations have contributed \$225,000 for Ethiopian relief, reports Lloyd Van Vactor, world service division general secretary of UC Board for World Ministries. The funds are earmarked for Church World Service, relief agency of the National Council of Churches, which has played a major role in transporting food sent by others to Ethiopia.

CWS has also shipped 50,000 blankets with an additional 50,000 enroute along with 6,500 tents and communications gear. Relief officials concede, however, that while they have helped an estimated 2,500,000 refugees, six

million more are likely to perish without massive outside help. The funds allotted so far, \$1,700,000, have been stretched to cover famine in six other African countries as well.

Much of the UCC money was raised through One Great Hour of Sharing, but Mr. Van Vactor says those who wish to help more may do so with directed gifts payable to UCBWM Service Division, African Food Crisis, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115. A blanket may be bought for \$5; \$14 buys 100 lbs. of flour; \$17, 100 lbs. of beans; \$100, a family size tent, and \$200, a larger tent to house a clinic or cook shed. Volunteers are also

needed, especially nurses with nutrition skills. Ethiopia will continue to need massive aid throughout 1985, Mr. Van Vactor contends.

Two UCC leaders, just back from a tour of refugee camps in Ethiopia, give high marks to church relief efforts. "Church groups move faster than governments and other private agencies," asserts Gustav Kuether, world service program secretary, UC Board for World Ministries. "Because we have long been in Ethiopia doing development work, we don't have to start from scratch."

"It's a matter of shifting gears," adds Marvin Ludwig, chairperson of the World Service Strategy Committee, UC Board for World Ministries, and president of Defiance College.

A \$50,000 grant from CWS to the Christian Relief and Development Association of Ethiopia made possible ten airlifts of foodstuffs into areas of high need "before anybody else had moved," reports Mr. Kuether.

Post Hails Bishops' Letter on U.S. Economy

Calling it a "gift to our time," UCC President Avery D. Post praises the U.S. Catholic bishops' "Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy" and commends it to the UCC for study.

"The Roman Catholic bishops delivered to us a gift of great promise for greater justice," Dr. Post notes of the 120 page document, which asks for sweeping changes in the economy to help the poor.

"It contains a hard and true word," Dr. Post asserts, "that we, without correction or strong protest, let our economic system in this country produce shameful levels of poverty that are beyond any possibility of moral tolerance."

The first draft of the letter, four years in preparation, was debated at the bishops' late 1984 conference in Washington, DC. A final version is being voted on this year.

It calls for a new "American experience" to guarantee full employment with adequate remuneration to keep the family together. The bishops charge that the level between wealth and income is "morally unacceptable" and urge an economic system meeting fundamental human needs as more important than production of luxury consumer goods.

Many of the recommendations seek a larger government role, including overhaul of a "woefully inadequate" welfare system and a Federal program to create jobs. While acknowledging that the draft is "provocative," Dr. Post hails it as a study that "utilizes biblical perspectives and values concerning human living."

"We can receive it," Dr. Post concludes, "even as we continue to work in the UCC on our own statement on economic justice, as a model of careful work concerning the most basic issues of economic and social living."

Mr. Kuether acknowledges that the solution in Ethiopia and the 28 other African countries chronically affected by famine must be solved by long-range international support of development projects, water reclamation and irrigation schemes, land reform and education. But churches, he asserts, can begin the process by carrying on experiments, "convincing our Government to follow our lead."

Both UCC representatives agree with Ethiopian charges that U.S. Government efforts have been too little too late. They say the Reagan Administration received pleas for aid in early 1984 but that nothing was done. Mr. Kuether blames politics for the inaction, noting that the Government there is Marxist.

Earlier, in Washington, DC, 150 U.S. religious leaders, including UCC President Avery D. Post and Neill Richards, UCC hunger action coordinator, signed a joint statement calling on President Reagan to authorize airlifts and other emergency mobilizations to move food to Ethiopia and other African nations.

Hispanic Council Holds First General Conference

The recent First Biennial General Conference of the national Council for Hispanic Ministries in Los Angeles was a "historic meeting which marks a critical milestone in the history of the UCC," remarks keynoter Avery D. Post, UCC President.

The rich diversity among the Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican and other Latino heritages of the members has been a historical challenge for the council. Representatives from all the groups in the council's constituency attended.

"The conference has changed the character of the council," explains Hector E. Lopez, president, "because of the critical dialogue which took place here among national staff, the officers and the people of the Hispanic church."

To develop communication with local conference offices and regional structures, the council has encouraged local Hispanic churches in each UCC region to develop working relationships with them. The Council noted with concern that there is only one Hispanic among the 150 UCC national professional staff members.

PB Announces Annuity Increases

The UCC Pension Boards has announced three annuity increases. There is a special increase for retired members receiving a monthly dividend annuity, a regular increase for those getting an annually-increasing annuity and a performance based rise in variable annuities.

Beginning with the Jan. 1985 payment, the assured basic amount of each monthly dividend annuity—which consists of a basic amount plus a monthly dividend—went up 4%.

The annually-increasing annuity is designed to grow every year. This year, the annuities will go up 7-1/2% or \$7.50 for every \$100 paid in 1984—the largest increase since this annuity choice was first offered in 1981.

Members who chose the annually-increasing annuity when they retired in 1981, 1982 or 1983 will receive the full increase. The rate of increase for pre-1977 money held in the Ministers Retirement Annuity Fund is 7%. For those who retired in 1984, the increase will be proportionate to the number of payments received that year.

Variable annuities, which change every six months, rose 6.8% in Jan. This is a result of stock market performance from June to Nov. 1984. Variable annuity payments will change again in July.

Religious Leaders Seek Clinic Bombing Investigation

Representatives of the United Methodist Church, Episcopal Church (U.S.A.), Church Women United, Union of American Hebrew Congregations and other religious organizations, including UCC President Avery D. Post, UC Board for Homeland Ministries executive vice president C. Shelby Rooks and Office for Church in Society policy advocacy associate Faith Evans, have protested the FBI's unwillingness to investigate the recent rash of family clinic bombings.

The letter to FBI Director William H. Webster took issue with his public statement that the bombings of family and women's clinics should not be "counted as terrorist activities" and thus not be subject to a full-scale investigation by the bureau.

"We find it difficult to understand why you would believe there is no pattern," the letter said, noting that bombings had occurred within minutes of each other in several cities on the same day.

"Our organizations do not all agree on the issue of abortion," the representatives said, "but hold in common the belief that life is a gift of God, and that all people should be safe from violence and are entitled to equal protection under the law."

The religious leaders called upon Mr. Webster "to use the power of your department" to protect lives and property of people "jeopardized by the violence."

GENERAL SYNOD 15: Boesak Keynote Speaker

Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and a leading opponent of South Africa's apartheid policies, will be a keynote speaker at General Synod 15, reports UCC Secretary Carol Joyce Brun.

Dr. Boesak was recently threatened with arrest by the South African Government because of comments attributed to him about the brutality of the South African police and military. South African Minister of Law and Order Louis LeGrange went on television to instruct the Attorney General there to bring charges against Dr. Boesak.

Other GS 15 keynoters will include theologian Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Talbot professor of New Testament at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, who will discuss the early Christian church and the role of women in it, and UCC President Avery D. Post, who will give his regular report to Synod and will also lead the closing worship service.

Up to 30 committees will deliberate on business referred to them. They will meet on Sat., June 29, in the afternoon and evening to formulate their recommendations to plenary sessions beginning on Sun. afternoon and continuing through Tue.

The hearings on the work of each instrumentality have been replaced by a unified presentation of the UCC's national bodies to the entire Synod, which will include plenary time for each.

Daily opportunities have been scheduled for delegates to speak without a formal motion on subjects that are not on the agenda. The "speak out" periods are limited to one minute per delegate.

Ministers May Lose Housing Allowance

If a Treasury Department tax proposal is approved by Congress, ministers will lose their right to deduct a housing allowance from taxable income. Pastors living in parsonages would also have to report the fair rental value of their homes as income.

The proposal also calls for the elimination of a rental exclusion for the military, but that loss would be compensated by pay increases.

The Treasury Department's proposal is separate from Revenue Ruling 83-3, which eliminates the itemized deduction of mortgage interest and real estate taxes to the extent that those items are used to support the amount of a tax-free housing allowance. If Congress eliminates the housing exclusion, then Ruling 83-3 would be irrelevant and homeownership clergy would, like anyone, be allowed to itemize these deductions on a primary residence, but would lose the minister's long-standing front-end exclusion of housing costs.

There will be a presentation on farm issues; a day during which the gifts of youth and young adults will be celebrated, and recognition of people given awards by UCC national bodies.

In addition to daily worship, delegates, officers, staff and visitors from the Iowa Conference will all worship together at a special service June 30.

Meals have been scheduled in two shifts to facilitate conference caucusing and special events. A pig roast and an ice cream social are planned. "Celebrity Cafes" scheduled each evening will provide opportunities for those who attend to display their talents.

San Francisco Partnership Ministry and South End Liberation Church, Boston, both received \$3,000 grants. The San Francisco program will provide educational support for Southeast Asian refugee mothers, while the Boston program will seek to improve parent-child communication within Hispanic families in Boston's South End.

Training teens to say "no" to sex pressure is an objective of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Task Force, Laodicea UCC, Raleigh, NC, which received a \$2,500 grant.

UCBHM made nine \$2,000 grants to other projects, a respite care program for young children at Pearl City Community Church, HI; Rocky Mountain Conference family training weekends, Lakewood, CO; a parent-child public policy advocacy project of the Vermont Conference, Waterbury Center, VT; a training

project for parenting consultants by the Wisconsin Conference, WI; a domestic violence response project in East St. Louis, IL; a videotape curriculum and a forum for adults with parenting responsibilities after retirement, Christ Church UCC, Bethlehem, PA; family life committees for the Shawnee, Sac and Fox tribes in Shawnee, OK; a family life renewal project, Bread Basket Ministries, Fort Worth, and a family peer training project in Austin.

United Church of Huntington, Wellington, OH, received \$1,500, for a systematic training project for parenting in rural areas in non-traditional family settings.

Grants of \$1,000 went to a family development meeting of the Chicago Association of the Illinois Conference; a network of family life advocates in the Penn Northeast Conference, Allentown; and a model family advocacy project of UCC churches in Greenwich, CT.

UCBHM Names Human Sexuality Consultants

UC Board for Homeland Ministries has named two halftime consultants to work with the board's human sexuality working group.

Mary Ellen Haines, who previously served for ten years as a consultant to the board, holds a Master of Arts degree in education and theological studies from Union Theological Seminary in New York City and is a member of Salem UCC, Gilbert, PA; and William Stackhouse, who is a Ph.D. candidate in counseling psychology at New York University, was director of the Parents' Project for the Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S. and adjunct lecturer at Manhattan Community College, and is a member of Judson Memorial Church in New York City.

The working group will identify and develop appropriate resources for all age groups, update churches on the latest information in the

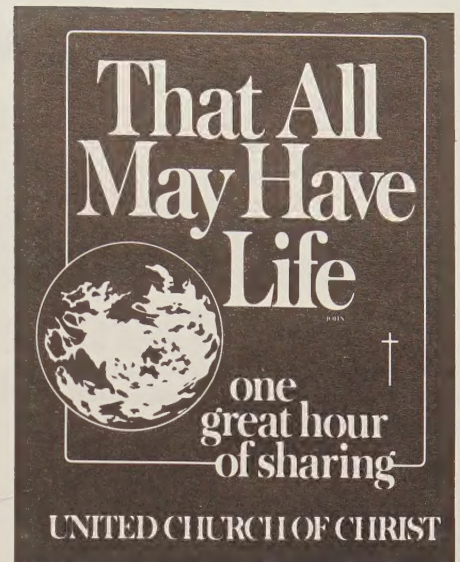
field, train people for local church leadership and develop a network of such people.

According to Alan Johnson, secretary for evangelism, the interdivisional working group was founded two years ago at the request of the board's young adult task force.

Purpose of the working group is to develop UCBHM's strong commitment to education about human sexuality. Members are Verlyn Barker, secretary, ministries in higher education, division of higher education and the American Missionary Association; Randall Furushima, secretary, youth education, division of Christian education; Alan Johnson, secretary, evangelism, division of evangelism and church extension; Faith Johnson, chairperson, secretary, family life and women's issues, division of health and welfare, and Bertrice Wood, secretary, urban and Black church education, division of Christian education.

work of Biblical Storytellers, New York Theological Seminary, 5 W. 29 St., New York, NY 10001, 914-831-6717.

"CONSULT V," bringing together UCC people involved in outdoor ministries, is scheduled for Feb. 23-26 at Pilgrim Pines Camp, Yucaipa, CA. Costing \$150, not including \$10 each for transportation to and from Ontario Airport and for linens, the meeting includes program discussions, field experiences, workshops and traditional outdoor ministries activities such as worship, music and dance. Science fiction novelist Ray Bradbury will speak, and optional tours to Universal Studios, Disneyland and Rosarito, Mexico are available on Feb. 28 and 29. Registrations were due Feb. 1, so all inquiries should be rushed to CONSULT V, Pilgrim Pines Camp, 39570 Glen Rd., Yucaipa, CA 92399, 714-797-1821 or 714-790-1567.



This year's One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will help provide education, agricultural development, medical aid, and disaster relief throughout the U.S. and overseas.

RECOMMENDED

THE BUSINESS OF AMERICA, a new 45-min. documentary on economic justice, examines the human tragedy of unemployment through the eyes of two laid-off Pittsburgh steelworkers. Purpose of the film is to enable viewers to develop their own approaches to economic renewal and decisionmaking. Available from California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103, 415-621-6196. Film rentals are \$65 and videocassette rentals are \$55, with discounts available for needy groups.

WHAT EVERY CHURCH MEMBER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CLERGY by Robert G. Kemper is a resource for lay church readers, especially those who select new pastors. The book helps explain the role of the clergy and their duties in a local church. Available for \$7.95 from Pilgrim Press, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001.

OBITUARIES

Raymond A. Dudley, 94, retired missionary to India, died Dec. 15 in Salem, OR. Mr. Dudley served in India 24 years for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, predecessor of UC Board for World Ministries. After returning to the U.S. in 1943, he served in Boston as secretary of the board's work in India. He later worked for the International Missionary Council in Geneva, Switzerland during its merger with the World Council of Churches.

Ralph R. Keithahn, 86, retired missionary to India, died Dec. 7 in India. He and his wife Luella adopted India as their home and chose a simple pattern of living among its poorer people. During his 40 years as a missionary, he worked for and supported many movements designed to bring economic justice and security to the Indian people. He also served in many youth training programs.

Upcoming Events

Outdoor ministries and storytelling are the focus of two upcoming meetings.

Learning to tell biblical stories related to peace—to children, in worship, through dance and in pastoral situations—will be the subject of an interdenominational festival in Maine this summer. "Telling the Stories of Peace: A Biblical Storytelling Festival" is slated for July 23-26 at the University of New England, Biddeford Pool, ME. Featured presenters are Norman K. Gottwald and Margret Eddy of New York Theological Seminary and Thomas Boomershine of United Theological Seminary, Dayton. Story swaps and 30 workshops will also be offered and childcare provided. Registration, room and board are \$120 before Mar. 15, \$135 after. Campers can pay \$40 before and \$60 after for registration to Net-

UCC Execs Join Apartheid Protests

Hoping to express their opposition to apartheid directly to South Africa's Consul General, six UCC national executives and two local pastors were arrested during demonstrations Dec. 18 at that country's Consulate in New York City.

Denouncing the apartheid system as "demonic and sinful," UCC President Avery D. Post joined some 50 other denominational staff members, both professional and clerical, in a sidewalk demonstration against apartheid.

Later, when Dr. Post and other UCC leaders tried to enter the Consulate building, they were arrested by police for trespassing. Those detained also included UCC Secretary Carol Joyce Brun; C. Shelby Rooks, executive vice president of UC Board for Homeland Ministries; Beverly J. Chain, director of the Office of Communication; Audrey C. Smock, world issues secretary of UC Board for World Ministries; Joseph T. McMillan, Jr., chairperson of the denomination's National Black Staff; Robert Sherard, minister of Corona Congregational UCC, Queens, and Howard Moody, minister of Judson Memorial Church, Manhattan.

Although demonstrations at the South African Embassy in Washington, DC had been carried out daily since Nov. 22 and at six consulates since Dec. 3, this marked the first time that headquarters staff from a major denomination was involved in the protests, according to the organizer, TransAfrica.

At the recommendation of the church's National Black Staff, the Council of Instrumentality Executives, consisting of the heads of the UCC's 11 national bodies, suggested that each body make it possible for those staff who wished to demonstrate "to make their witness against apartheid." The action was taken on

the basis of a number of votes of General Synod, the most recent calling for the "entire constituency" of the UCC "to do all in its power to end the theologically and morally indefensible system of apartheid."

"Jesus Christ stands with the poor and the oppressed, and we can do no other," said Dr. Brun of her decision to be arrested.

On the same day, staff of the UCC's Office for Church in Society picketed the South African Embassy in Washington. On Dec. 4, Charles E. Cobb, executive director of the UCC's Commission for Racial Justice, and Benjamin F. Chavis, CRJ's deputy director, were arrested.

Dr. Post urged UCC members, as individuals and in groups representing associations and conferences, to protest apartheid at South African Consulates in New York, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Dallas and Los Angeles. Earlier, the Council of Instrumentality Executives asked all the denomination's members to find ways to "witness against the discriminatory policies and actions of the South African Government."

The UCC leaders insisted that demonstrations have a practical effect. "We need to remind our Government that the so-called policy of constructive effort has not produced any fundamental change," Dr. Rooks emphasized.

Dr. Smock insisted that the South African Government "is one of the most sensitive in the world to public opinion." UCC leaders expressed satisfaction that the ongoing demonstrations were a major reason President Reagan condemned apartheid in a recent Human Rights Day speech.

"One of the pillars of the apartheid system is the support of the American Government,"

contended Dr. Smock. "If we can withdraw that, the South African Government will be standing on one leg, not two."

UC Scene

The Sewing and Material Aid Group of Faith UCC, Springfield, MA, is providing new clothing and other assistance to the needy people of Springfield. Through fund-raising, the volunteers are able to buy the material with which they make shirts, pants, skirts, sweaters, baby layettes and winter outerwear.

"UCC Friends For Life," now organizing nationwide, is working to identify UCC members who share its desire to defend "the unborn, the handicapped and the elderly, whose lives are threatened by abortion, infanticide and euthanasia." For more information, write them at 26500 State Route 58, Wellington, OH 44090, c/o Connie Carmany.

Retired UCC minister Graham R. Hodges, Liverpool, NY, was co-recipient of the 1984 Religious Freedom Award presented by the New York State Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. Mr. Hodges served Emmanuel Congregational Church, Watertown, for 24 years. He was a founder and officer of Planned Parenthood of Northern New York and of the New York State Coalition for Family Planning, was co-convenor of RCAR and serves on the public policy committee of Planned Parenthood Center of Syracuse.

NOTICE

The Office of Communication is seeking features for its new national tabloid as well as news items for KEEPING YOU POSTED. Questions to national UCC bodies, updates on local UCC priorities activities, columns for a theology forum, upcoming events that are national in scope, obituaries, job opportunities that would attract applicants nationally and news of UCC members and churches should be addressed to OC, UCC, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

Office of Communication, UCC



Demonstrating at the South African Consulate are second from left, partially hidden, Robert Sherard; fourth from left, C. Shelby Rooks; Carol Joyce Brun, and Avery D. Post, reading a statement to TV news.

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